

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the claimed invention is respectfully requested in view of the amendments, remarks and enclosures herewith, which place the application in condition for allowance.

I. STATUS OF CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

With the addition of new claim 15, claims 1-15 are now pending in this application. The sheet and strip limitation of claim 1 is supported in the specification on page 7, lines 36-37. The thickness limitations of claims 1 and 17 are supported in the specification on page 8, lines 3-6. The dissolution time of new claims 18 and 19 are supported in page 5, second paragraph of the specification. New claim 20 is dependent upon claim 5 and includes the limitations of claims 9 and 16-18. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

It is submitted that the claims, herewith and as originally presented, are patentably distinct over the prior art cited in the Office Action, and that these claims were in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112. The amendments of the claims, as presented herein, are not made for purposes of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §§§§ 101, 102, 103 or 112. Rather, these amendments and additions are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. ABSTRACT HAS BEEN PROVIDED

An abstract has been provided in the last page of the response (after the signature block page).

III. THE 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd PARAGRAPH REJECTION HAS BEEN OVERCOME

Claim 10 was rejected as allegedly indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regards as the invention. The narrower range has been deleted and reintroduced in new claim 16 which should obviate this rejection. (Note claims 6 and 8 also had similar "broad range"/"narrow range" issues and has been corrected - narrow range reintroduced into new claim 15 and amended claim 9 respectively)

IV. THE 35 U.S.C. 102(b) REJECTION HAS BEEN OVERCOME

Claims 1-8, 10, 11 and 14 were rejected as allegedly being anticipated by Colgate-Palmolive Co. (GB 1,551,578 - "Colgate" - As the same reference was used in the separate rejection for claims 1-8 and 10; claim 11 and claim 14, the applicants are treating this as a single

rejection over Colgate.) The applicants request reconsideration of this rejection for the following reasons.

The soap preparation of Colgate is a “bar” (see page 1, line 6). However, the claims as amended now refer to the applicants soap preparation as being sheets or strips whose thickness does not exceed 5 mm which is not taught by Colgate (Colgate mentions “a bar 2 cm thick can be wetted and pressed ... to a 1 cm thickness and will immediately ... return to the 2 cm thickness” which does not distinctly define the applicants soap preparation which is a sheet or strip having a thickness that does not exceed 5 mm.

In addition, an essential feature of Colgate’s soap bar is the presence of “gelatin” and in the preparation and a “liquid medium” which is water or a lower alcohol, confer page 1, line 13. The gelatin is a mixture of polypeptides. According to the presently pending claims 4 and 5, the film- or backbone forming polymer is selected from a group of various natural or synthetic polymers, which does not include gelatin.

Lastly, the soap preparation of claims 18-20 include limitations on dissolution times upon contact with water which is also not taught by the Colgate reference.

Since all of the elements of the applicants’ invention as presently claimed is not taught by Colgate or presented in a manner which distinctly defines the applicants’ claimed invention in the manner the applicants have done, the Colgate reference does not anticipate the applicants’ claims as amended.

V. THE 35 U.S.C. 103(a) REJECTION HAS BEEN OVERCOME

Claims 9, 12 and 13 was rejected as allegedly being obvious over Colgate-Palmolive Co. (GB 1,551,578 - “Colgate” - As the same reference was used in the separate rejection for claim 9; claim 12 and claim 13, the applicants are treating this as a single rejection over Colgate.) The applicants request reconsideration of this rejection for the following reasons.

As noted above in the response to the anticipation rejection, the presence of a gelatin is a critical feature of Colgate which in turn forms their soap bars and is not conducive to the formation of sheets or strips. However, modifying the teachings of the prior art requires a reasonable expectation of success and cannot render the invention of Colgate unsuitable for its described purpose. Therefore, the necessity of gelatin in Colgate’s soap bars means that the change in shape or size is not an obvious matter of choice given the teachings of Colgate.

With regard to the limitations of claims 12 and 13, optimization of a variable is permissible if as noted in the office action, the optimized variable is known to be result-effective. However, there is no description within Colgate that the additional compression is results effective. It is only when the skilled artisan has the applicants' claims before them that it would be known to add additional compression which is an improper basis upon which to assert obviousness for the claimed limitation.

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks and amendments herewith, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application and prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited. The undersigned looks forward to hearing favorably from the Examiner at an early date, and, the Examiner is invited to telephonically contact the undersigned to advance prosecution. The Commission is authorized to charge any fee occasioned by this paper, or credit any overpayment of such fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,
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